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A DECORATIVE DOMESTIC
DIFFERENCE.

BY STANLEY HUNTLEY.

"SAY, my dear," observed Mrs. Spoopendyke, "you promised me some new furniture, and, I think, it would be an excellent idea to have it in this new esthetic style, as they call it. What do you think?" And Mrs. Spoopendyke, in drawing up her sewing chair for a confidential chat on the subject, run over her husband's instep, and lifted him into a pleasant frame of mind for the contemplation of the project.

"What d'ye mean by esthetic?" he growled, dropping his paper, and kicking the cane-bottomed rocker across the room. "If you mean something that don't weigh more'n a ton, when it comes down on a man's hoof, I'm in, but if you mean a lot o' spindled-legged chairs, in knee-breeches, frilled shirts, and a sunflower in their button holes, I'm out!" and Mr. Spoopendyke regarded his foot with great solemnity, and awaited further revelations of his wife's scheme.

"No, no!" fluttered Mrs. Spoopendyke, "I mean some nice paper on the walls, with Egyptian figures, and a carpet to match!"

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Spoopendyke. "I suppose by Egyptian figures, you mean the English war debt, and a carpet to harmonize with that would have to be made up of bonds and stocks, with a border of mortgages, and a centre piece of increased taxes," in the contemplation of which royal magnificence Mr. Spoopendyke rolled his eyes and scowled prodigiously.

"Then," continued Mrs. Spoopendyke, ignoring this description, "then we want a Dauphine bed, some chairs, and a sofa in the style of the Italian Renaissance, a portière over the alcove, and the ceiling frescoed in some mythological suggestion. Wouldn't that be perfectly elegant?" and Mrs. Spoopendyke clapped her hands in delight, and looked smilingly into her husband's face.

"Wouldn't it!" grinned Mr. Spoopendyke, with a horrible grimace. "Setting aside that Italian Renaissance, which, I suppose, we could hire cheap, organ, monkey, and all, what d'ye reckon would be the expense of those other dead heads?"

"I don't know," murmured Mrs. Spoopendyke, doubtfully. "The paper should have a dark dado and a pretty frieze, with some storks and cranes, and—," but here Mrs. Spoopendyke, whose information on the subject was general rather than specific, stopped short and picked her teeth with her finger nail, as an excuse for the interruption.

"Well," retorted Mr. Spoopendyke, "what kind of a carpet ordinarily goes with that sort of a buzzard? If you're going to make that species of game feel any way at home, you've got to plaster the floor with mud! That your idea? Expect me to skate around this room in a pair of hip boots, and feed those turkeys, or do you calculate to train the dado and frieze to the business?"

"May be you'd prefer paper with Chinese figures," suggested Mrs. Spoopendyke.

"I don't know but what I would," grinned Mr. Spoopendyke. "You might paste up a lot of wash bills, and for your allegory, you might have a Chinese Joss running for constable on the Democratic ticket, which would set off that Dauphine bed, make the portière laugh like a cellar door, and inspire that Italian Renaissance with a great deal of confidence in himself! On the whole, I think I rather fancy the Chinese business. What sort of a dado would look well with such an outfit?" and Mr. Spoopendyke clothed his countenance with an expression of profound interest.

"Do you remember the one we saw at the dancing party the other night?" asked Mrs. Spoopendyke.

"You mean the tall one with a hole in his hair and a roof on his nose from wearing tight spectacles?" demanded Mr. Spoopendyke, suddenly remembering the gentleman who had been rather attentive to Mrs. Spoopendyke. "If he'd come, and we could be sure he wouldn't eat up the storks, and would get along pleasantly with the Renaissance, I wouldn't mind slapping him in with the wash bills."

"You don't know what I mean," pouted Mrs. Spoopendyke. "The dado and frieze are part of the ornamentation. They ain't alive. The dado goes at the bottom, and the frieze on top, or the dado on the top and the frieze on the bottom—I've forgotten which"—and Mrs. Spoopendyke scratched her ear in an effort at recollection.

"P'raps they take turns," suggested Mr. Spoopendyke. "May be one has one Sunday out, and the other the next. On the same principle, I suppose, the portière and the Renaissance take turns at the organ, and the Dauphine bed and the Chinese allegory jig around for the amusement of the storks and cranes!"

"That shows all you know about it!" sobbed Mrs. Spoopendyke, indignantly. "This new system of decorative art is the prettiest thing in the world, and I want to fix this room up in Beauvois and Gobelin, and you are real mean not to let me!"

"P'raps so!" sneered Mr. Spoopendyke, his wrath rising. "But when I consent to sleep in a Dauphine bed, with a dough-faced goblin prancing around with a lot of yellow-legged turkey buzzards to slow music of an Italian Renaissance, it will be later on in the season! What's the matter with

silver! Why, dear, you can't have them anything else!" and Mrs. Spoopendyke's lip quivered, and her eyes filled.

"Can't! can't! can't I!" howled Mr. Spoopendyke, to whom this revelation represented a year's income. "Can't get along without hiring a rainbow to come in here and take charge of the establishment! You ain't satisfied to fix the place up with a lot of burglar's tools, but you must make it look like a conflagration besides! Let's go right at it! If we must die without this new combination, let's slide it right up! Bring me the terra cotta jug without delay! Pour forth the bands of sage green! Step down cellar and fetch me up that barrel of old gold! Reach up the chimney and hand me that bag of silver I laid aside to melt down and stop up the rat holes! Bite me off another chunk of stucco! It's expensive, but the storks cry for it! It's scarce, but the Renaissance has always been accustomed to it!" And with each exclamation, jerked out of him with prodigious effort, Mr. Spoopendyke slammed away at the walls, and waltzed up and down the room like a top.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Spoopendyke, firmly; "and we must have inlaid chairs and sofa—"

"Haul them right up!" yelled Mr. Spoopendyke. "Never mind the plaster! Hack it off, and fill up the hole from that barrel of gold that came yesterday by mistake for potatoes!"

"And the Louis XVI. bed," proceeded Mrs. Spoopendyke, unheeding the interruption.

"Let there be no delay about the bed!" clamored Mr. Spoopendyke, lost in wrath and amazement at the temerity of his wife in proposing such things. "Produce the bed, and be careful not to spill out the king! Fetch up the monarchial couch! Hand in the royal camp cot!" And Mr. Spoopendyke's eyes stuck as far as they would had the lamented king appeared in person, with his sleeping apparatus on his shoulder.

"Anything else?" demanded Mr. Spoopendyke, as his wife paused. "Can't we have an extra gross of sovereigns in stock to keep the esthetics in repair? Don't we need some kings and queens on draught in case of accidents or visitors?"

"And, dear," said Mrs. Spoopendyke, approaching him with a winning smile, "I have ordered all these things, and got them so cheaply that I was able to pay for them with the money I have

saved out of the household fund. They don't cost you a dollar!"

Mr. Spoopendyke disrobed slowly and crawled into bed.

"You are not angry, dear?" cooed Mrs. Spoopendyke, controlling a strong disposition to laugh.

"Didn't order an easy chair for me, I suppose?" growled Mr. Spoopendyke. "Never thought of me while you had those storks on your mind!" and Mr. Spoopendyke regarded her furtively, with an expression of considerable anxiety on his face.

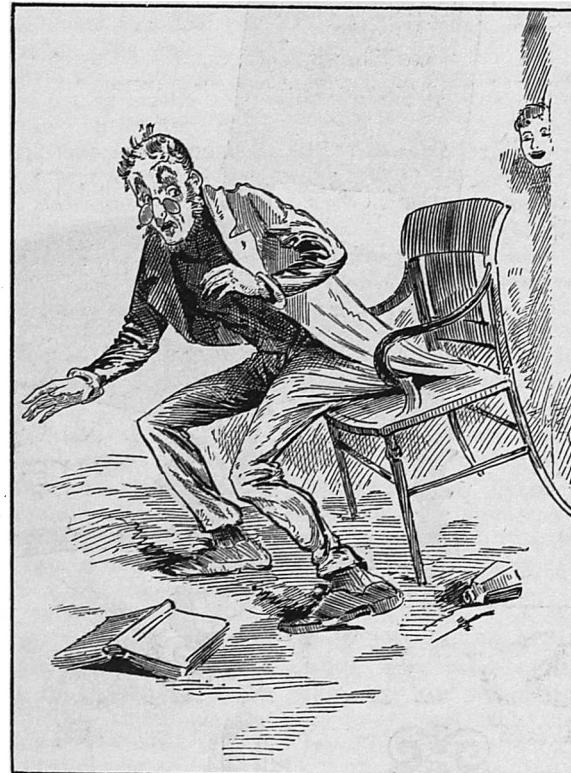
"Yes, dear," replied Mrs. Spoopendyke. "It is an elegant Renaissance chair, covered with Algerian tissues, and it is expressly for you. No one else will touch it!"

"You might have consulted me before you picked it out! I'll bet I won't like it!" grunted Mr. Spoopendyke; but his wife detected a sigh of relief just in advance of the first snore that recorded Mr. Spoopendyke's arrival upon the shores of peaceful, innocent slumber.

"THE Sheriff will be here to-morrow, and everything we have will be swept away;" and he bowed his head in his hands and groaned aloud.

The patient little wife went softly to a bureau drawer, and taking therefrom \$80,000, which she had saved from her household expenses, placed the package quietly at his feet.

Half an hour later the mortgage was paid off, and the old man was around the corner playing seven-up for beer.—*Philadelphia Call.*



STUCK-O.



DAD-O.